culture, moreover, seems to have made its influence felt in the Yangtze Valley.

### THE CHOU DYNASTY

The conventional story told of the downfall of the Shang and the establishment of the Chou dynasty resembles that by which tradition accounts for the ruin of the Hsia. It may be, indeed, that the latter is copied from the former. Here, too, an infamous ruler, this time named Chou Hsin, a man of ability, aided and incited by a favorite concubine, turned tyrant and profligate. Many cruelties and excesses are ascribed to the ill-omened pair, Chou Hsin came into conflict with Wen Wang, the ruler of Chou.

Chou, a principality in the valley of the Wei, on the western frontier of the then China, represented the growth of a new, vigorous state—its prowess strengthened by prolonged warfare with the barbarians—as contrasted with the older order. The Chou people seem to have been related to the Chinese already on the North China plain, but racially and culturally somewhat different from them. Wen Wang was, significantly, called the "Chief of the West." The Chou intermarried with the Shang, but the two were clearly not identical. Certainly, too, the coming of the Chou was attended by a fairly sharp break in cultural development. In many ways the civilization of the Chou differed from that of the Shang.

Later historians glorified Wen Wang, representing his character and administration as ideal. It seems probable that he helped to strengthen the Chou domains in preparation for the struggle for supreme power. Chou Hsin was at first successful against Wen Wang. The latter was imprisoned and was released only on the payment of a heavy fine. His son, known to later

generations under the title of Wu Wang, finally led in a revolt which overthrew the tyrant. The latter set fire to his palace and perished in the flames, his corpse was decapitated by his rival, the hated concubine was executed by the victors, and Wu Wang set up a new dynasty, the Chou.

The traditional account of the overthrow of the Shang bears the earmarks of partisanship, and very possibly arose from the narrative preserved by the victorious Chou in the ceremonies of their ancestral temple. Chou Hsin may not have been nearly the